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A Tree Grows in Brooklyn: Descriptive Analysis

I decided to do a diary as my creative character analysis because not only does it allow me to use my creativity both in design and writing, but also because it allows me to distill in a few pages the essence of my main character, Francie, as she experiences the fascinating journey of life. In the novel, A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, Francie Nolan, a girl growing up during the early 1900’s in Brooklyn, New York doesn’t have much money, but experiences the almost mundane occurrences of everyday life with a never- ending sense joy and curiosity. Simple things like reading a book and eating a pennies’ worth of candy atop a rickety old fire escape on a Saturday afternoon provide Francie with the most wonderful sense of pleasure. A diary is the perfect choice to capture her character. For one thing, Francie’s life happens a day at a time, with each new morning bringing with it something more marvelous than the day before, just as each entry brings a new surprise, but also because Francie is a writer herself and even keeps a diary of her own to recount the day to day happenings of a grade schooler. Whether watching magnificent horse drawn buggies glide past her window on their way into the city, spending an afternoon in the library getting lost in her favorite novel for the fourth time, or even helping Nellie, her brother drag their first Christmas tree home through the snow covered streets of Brooklyn at midnight on Christmas Eve, to Francie the world is one vast and beautiful place where each day brings a new and wondrous adventure. Throughout her diary and the novel Francie showcases (if unknowingly) the vast cultural melting pot that Brooklyn and her daily life is. She walks down “Jew street” to get a loaf of rye bread and attends a school where if you can prove your parents were born in America it is equivalent to stardom. Francie’s neighborhood of immigrants from all over Europe and Asia, and her daily interactions with them is one cultural experience after another. The events that she deems important enough to write down in her diary, like her love of reading and her routine attendance of church, as well as the fact that her diary is really a collection of assorted and ripped pieces of paper tied together with a thin ribbon symbolize that education, dedication to God, and poverty are major ideas or problems that make up her identity. Finally, proven by the fact that almost everyone of her diary entries includes either a family member or friend who shares in the experiences that shape her life, we see that though impoverished, what Francie values far more than money is the love of her family and the gift of friendship.